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The Verneys, who own Claydon, live in a scrambling adjoining house, to which they have retreated, leaving this masterpiece, by an almost unrecorded carpenter-contractor named Lightfoot, for the delectation of sight-seers. Florence Nightingale frequently stayed here with her sister, Lady Verney. The family has apparently had its ups and downs. One 18th Century member, famed for his reckless extravagance, is said to have had as an escort for his coach a band of musical blackamoors, dressed and turbaned in the Venetian manner.

I returned to London in time for dinner with E and the children, who had earlier arrived from Paris. The sixteen and eleven year old were as excited by their voyage as if they had just come back from the Grand Tour.

Had some office business to transact tonight. News of the break-up at Brussels of Common Market negotiations at 7 o'clock this morning was disappointing. Conversations will be resumed in September or October.

August 6, 1962 - Monday

Today is Bank Holiday, the traditional commencement of the vacation season. Government offices will be largely deserted until September, the Parliament will probably not reconvene until late October, and London hotels and restaurants will cater almost exclusively to foreigners. Grouse shooting begins a week from today. From early morning to nightfall it has rained; the temperature has been 55°. What a climate!

Odette Dewavrin came to see E. [redacted] Sasha is taking seven schoolmates to the theatre.

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